designing of large size open cast mines for rapid expansion of coal production necessitated such foreign collaboration;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Coal India Limited have claimed that they are in a position to offer development technology for large scale open cast mining to China;

(d) if so, whether there is contradiction between the above stated statements; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) Foreign collaboration in the coal sector is sought to acquire modern mining technology, procure sophisticated high capacity equipment, give training to mining personnel in mproved techniques, facilitate induction of productivity-oriented technologies, tackle difficult geo-mining conditions, beneficiate coal and also to obtain concessional external assistance to meet import costs.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) Indian coal mining Industry has adequate technical know-how to offer to countries like China, where opencast mining is not yet fully developed.

Coal price determination structure

7589. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the existing coal price determination structure is not transparent;

(b) what have been the considerations for upward revision of coal prices so many times within a very short period of one or two years;

(c) whether one of the reasons for this is the inefficiency of the officials of Coal industry and upward manipulation of cost;

(d) whether Government have received complaints with regard to (c) above; and

(e) if so, what action has been taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) to (e) The prices of coal are determined in accordance with an escalation formula decided by Bureau of Industrial Costs & Prices (BICP). The formula being objective and based on priceindices, the question of any manipulation of costs by coal companies does not arise. The prices are generally revised once in a year to neutralise the impact of increases in cost indices. An earlier revision is also allowed in case of any quantum increase in costs such as wage revision, which cannot be accommodated by the coal companies within the existing price structure.

Although there have been no complaints alleging manipulation of costs, there has been some criticism of coal price increases from coal consumers. Government has been advising coal companies to make all efforts for improving efficiency and reducing costs. However, the impact due to the increased costs of inputs beyond the control of coal companies has to be neutralised by periodical increases in prices so as to enable the coal companies to remain profitable and generate resources for investment.

Time and cost over runs in coal mining projects

7590. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) which are the coal mining projects where time and cost over runs have been reported:

(b) whether the officials of the Coal Ministry and Coal India Limited were involved in the preparation of project report, their execution and monitoring in respect of these projects;

(c) if so, the reasons for the time and cost over runs that have occurred;

(d) whether the concerned officials have been made accountable;

(e) if so, details thereof; and